



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 4, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY WELCOME PATRONS AND MATERIALS  
HOME WITH FINE AMNESTY**

*Welcome Home Program Kicks Off CPL and FCB Partnership for 'Home of the Curious' Campaign*

Mayor Emanuel and Chicago Public Library (CPL) today announced the "Welcome Home" fine amnesty program, part of the new "Home of the Curious" visibility campaign. Through this program, the Library expects to "Welcome Home" thousands of outstanding items as well as welcome back thousands of patrons whose access to library materials has been impeded by overdue fines. From February 4 through February 18, late fees will be waived on all books, CDs, DVDs and other materials, no matter how long overdue. If an item has been lost, the patron will only be responsible for paying the replacement cost, and all fees will be forgiven.

"We are reconnecting residents of all ages with one of Chicago's greatest resources," said Mayor Emanuel. "The Chicago Public Library is the best library system in America because of innovative initiatives like the amnesty program and our wide assortment of materials and available technology. By welcoming back generations of patrons and restocking the shelves, we are building a stronger Chicago with new opportunities for learning for every Chicagoan."

"This program allows the library to recover assets but it is also meant to give people with overdue materials a chance to start over with a clean record, no matter how long the items have been checked out or the reasons for not returning them," said Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon. "It aligns with our commitment to lowering the barriers to library use and providing basic access for all Chicagoans, especially those most in need of our services."

The promotion is expected to recoup the City's investment in materials and make the returned items available for other patrons to use. When CPL last offered an amnesty program, in 2012, the library received 101,301 overdue items, valued at approximately \$2 million, and waived \$641,820 worth of fines. Over 40,000 patrons renewed their Library cards, and the Library welcomed home thousands more users. The late materials ranged from items only a few weeks overdue to one book that had been due in 1934. Almost every item returned was able to be put back out into circulation within a few days, so that other patrons could check them out. The last amnesty program before 2012 was in 1985.

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602

The “Home of the Curious” visibility was campaign created by CPL’s pro-bono partner, advertising agency FCB Chicago, and sponsored by The Chicago Public Library Foundation.

“Chicago Public Library encourages lifelong learning by offering equal access to the library’s extensive resources” said Michael Fassnacht, Chicago Public Library Foundation Board member and CEO of FCB Chicago. “At the library we all share one common mindset – curiosity. This campaign will welcome people back in a fun, humorous way, while also creating awareness for all of the library’s resources.”

“Home of the Curious” features Chicagoans and their interests as well as several promotional videos starring actual library staff members, and their personal pleas to return overdue goods. Campaign elements will be seen on banners outside CPL locations as well as on public transportation, the city’s digital billboard network, the Library’s social media and various other places around the city. It will last through April as patrons continue to rediscover their curiosity through all of the different materials and programs their local branches have to offer.

The Library also utilized this time to do a small brand refresh inclusive of an updated logo & seal with the goal of driving cohesiveness across the Library and its sub-brands. This work is yet another example of the type of public-private partnership the Library and the Chicago Public Library Foundation have come to be known for thanks to the generous support of the Chicago’s business and philanthropic communities.

“The Chicago Public Library Foundation and its donors are dedicated to the curious,” said Bob Wislow, Chicago Public Library Foundation Board Chair. “From the Summer Learning Challenge to Teachers in the Library and *One Book, One Chicago*, we have a 30 year commitment of supporting Library initiatives that open minds and encourage discovery for Chicagoans of all ages, in every neighborhood of the city.”

Chicago Public Library provides a combination of traditional library services and 21st century technology, including access to 3D printers, computers and the internet, and digital skill building. The wide range of programming for kids, teens, and adults is focused on nurturing learning and supporting economic advancement.

# # #

Since 1873, the Chicago Public Library (CPL) has encouraged lifelong learning by welcoming all people and offering equal access to information, entertainment and knowledge through innovative services and programs, as well as cutting-edge technology. Through its 80 locations, the Library provides free access to a rich collection of materials, both physical and digital, and presents the highest quality author discussions, exhibits and programs for children, teens and adults. CPL received the Social Innovator Award from Chicago Innovation Awards; won a National Medal for Library Services from the Institute for Museum and Library Services; was named the first ever winner of the National Summer Learning Association’s Founder’s Award in recognition of its Summer Learning Challenge; and was ranked number one in the U.S., and

third in the world by an international study of major urban libraries conducted by the Heinrich Heine University Dusseldorf in Germany. For more information, please call (312) 747-4050 or visit [chipublib.org](http://chipublib.org).